B1 unloading position while said second transfer carriage is in said cutting position.

16. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein said first transfer carriage is movable between said unloading and loading positions while said second transfer carriage is in said cutting position.

B2 17. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said apparatus includes a first drive operable to move said carriage along a first axis relative to said cutting head in said cutting position.

18. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said apparatus includes a second drive operable to return said carriage to said loading position.

27. (Amended) A plasma arc cutting apparatus including:

a plasma arc cutting head;

a movable bed for supporting a planar workpiece;

B3 a path defining a circuit about which said movable bed can move;

said movable bed being movable to a cutting position in which said cutting head is operable to cut the workpiece;

said head being mounted to move in two directions relative to the movable bed to permit said cutting head to cut profiles in a planar workpiece carried on said bed; and

the movable bed being operable to transport the workpiece away from the cutting head when cutting of the workpiece has ceased.

B4 29. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 28 wherein said movable beds are constrained to move along said circuit between said cutting position and a loading position.

4) Amendment to the Abstract

A metal cutting process employs an apparatus including a cutting machine operable to cut two dimensional profiles in plates. The plates are transported to and from the cutting machine on carriages. The carriages are movable between a cutting, or burn position , an un-loading position, and a loading, or re-loading position along a path. The path forms a closed circuit, or loop. In the burn position the cutting machine is operable to cut profiles in the plates. Cutting on one carriage can occur while another carriage, or other carriages, are being loaded or unloaded, or both. The